

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MANUAL 1-401
OCTOBER 24, 2003***

***Administration and Management
Human Capital, NWSPD 1-4***

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

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Employee Recognition

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1. Introduction. This Manual provides guidance on employee recognition programs in the Department of Commerce (DOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and National Weather Service (NWS) and the NWS's procedures for completing the processes. Our intent is to ensure that individuals are knowledgeable of the processes and are able to successfully complete them in accordance with DOC, NOAA, and NWS policy. In addition, this Manual explains the Chief Financial/Chief Administrative Office, Management and Organization Division's (W/CFO3) role in the processes and identifies the necessary actions of the Financial Management Centers (FMCs).

Questions about NWS awards procedures may be directed to CFO3 staff at (301)713-1698.

2. DOC Gold Medal Award.

- a. Definition. The Gold Medal is the highest honorary award granted by the Secretary of Commerce. A Gold Medal is defined as distinguished performance characterized by extraordinary, notable or prestigious contributions that impact the mission of DOC, NOAA, or its operating units, such as NWS.
- b. Categories. Employees can receive a Medal for leadership, personal and professional excellence, scientific/engineering achievement, organizational development, customer service, administrative & technical support, and heroism.
- c. Award Type. Medals are given to individuals, groups, or organizations (single or joint).
- d. Eligibility. All employees are eligible; supervisory and non-supervisory. They must have received a “meets expectations” or “eligible” rating for the most recent rating cycle.
- e. Criteria. To warrant a Gold Medal Award, a contribution must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Achievement of critical program goals far surpassing expectations, marked by unusual creativity, energy, or persistence, contributing significantly to the welfare of the Nation;
 - Unusually outstanding leadership or management that results in dramatic improvement in productivity, program effectiveness, or quality of the Department’s service to the Nation;
 - Scientific or technological breakthroughs that resolve longstanding problems or radically advance the state-of-the-art;
 - Highly distinguished authorship or editorship that affects the primary principles of the discipline involved, opens up new fields of inquiry, or redefines major issues of investigation; or
 - Heroic actions involving jeopardy to life.
- f. The Call. The Department initiates the call in January. NOAA forwards the information to the Line Offices (LOs).

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- g. Nominator. All employees may submit nominations; however, a supervisor and/or manager must approve the nomination and the Office/Regional director must concur.
- h. Package Nominations are sent in hard-copy from the Office/Regional Requirements. director to W/CFO3.
- I. Review Three reviews are held to approve/disapprove nominations. Requirements. Reviews are done at the NWS, NOAA, and DOC levels.

The NWS review is conducted by the Personnel Management Advisory Committee (PMAC); this committee consists of Office/Regional Directors. The Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA) chairs the panel. PMAC approved nominations are submitted to NOAA through a web-based, electronic system; the Honors Awards Nomination System (HANS), by the nominating Office/Region.

The NOAA review is conducted by the NOAA Incentive Awards Board (NIAB); one manager from each LO serves on this board for a 2-year period.

The DOC review is conducted by the Department's Incentive Awards Board (DIAB); each bureau has a senior official to serve on this board.

- j. Recognition. Recipients receive an engraved medal at a ceremony. Individuals and every member of a group will receive an engraved medal. A single organization receives one engraved medal and each joint organization receives their own engraved medal.

3. DOC Silver Medal Award.

- a. Definition. The Silver Medal is the second highest honorary award granted by the Secretary. A Silver Medal is defined as exceptional performance characterized by noteworthy or superlative contributions which have a direct and lasting impact within DOC, NOAA, or NWS.
- b. Categories. Employees can receive a Medal for leadership, personal and professional excellence, scientific/engineering achievement, organizational development, customer service, administrative & technical support, and heroism.

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- c. Award Type. Medals are given to individuals, groups, or organizations (single or joint).
- d. Eligibility. All employees are eligible; supervisory and non-supervisory. They must have received a “meets expectations” or “eligible” rating for the most recent rating cycle.
- e. Criteria. To warrant a Silver Medal Award, a contribution must meet at least one of the following criteria:
- Achievement of important program goals, marked by excellence of performance and quality of results exceeding expectations;
 - Superior leadership or management resulting in substantial improvements in productivity, program effectiveness, or the quality of the Department’s service;
 - Scientific or technological contributions that significantly advance the understanding, knowledge, or mastery of a given discipline;
 - Exceptionally meritorious authorship or editorship that contributes significantly to the body of knowledge in a given field; or
 - Unusual coverage or competence in an emergency.
- f. The Call. The Department initiates the call in January. NOAA forwards the information to the LOs.
- g. Nominator. All employees may submit nominations; however, a supervisor and/or manager must approve the nomination and the Office/Regional director must concur.
- h. Package Requirements. Nominations are sent in hard-copy from the Office/Regional director to W/CFO3.
- I. Review Requirements. Three reviews are held to approve/disapprove nominations. Reviews are done at the NWS, NOAA, and DOC levels.
- The NWS review is conducted by PMAC. PMAC approved nominations are submitted to NOAA through a web-based, electronic system; the HANS, by the nominating Office/Region.

The NOAA review is conducted by the NIAB.

The DOC review is conducted by the DIAB.

- _____j. Recognition. Recipients receive an engraved medal at a ceremony. Individuals and each member of a group will receive an engraved medal. A single organization receives one engraved medal and each joint organization receives their own engraved medal.

4. NOAA Bronze Medal Award.

- a. Definition. The Bronze Medal is the highest honorary award granted by the Undersecretary of Oceans and Atmosphere. A Bronze Medal is defined as superior performance characterized by outstanding or significant contributions, which have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA.
- b. Categories. Employees can receive a Medal for leadership, personal and professional excellence, scientific/engineering achievement, organizational development, customer service, administrative & technical support, and heroism.
- c. Award Type. Medals are given to individuals, groups, or organizations (single or joint).
- d. Eligibility. All employees are eligible; supervisory and non-supervisory. They must have received a “meets expectations” or “eligible” rating for the most recent rating cycle.
- e. Criteria. Contributions must meet one or more of the following criteria:
- Accomplishing improvements in management systems that make them more effective or more efficient;
 - Demonstration of unusual or creative ability in the development and improvement of methods and procedures;
 - A significant contribution affecting major programs, or a scientific accomplishment; or
 - Superior performance of assigned tasks with the operating unit for at least 5 consecutive years.

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- f. The Call. The Director of Human Resources Management Office, NOAA, initiates the call. The Bronze Medal is usually announced in January.
 - g. Nominator. All employees may submit nominations; however, a supervisor and/or manager must approve the nomination and the Office/Regional director must concur.
 - h. Package Requirements. Nominations are sent in hard-copy from the Office/Regional director to W/CFO3.
 - I. Review Requirements. Two reviews are held to approve/disapprove nominations.

The NWS review is conducted by the PMAC. PMAC approved nominations are submitted to NOAA through a web-based, electronic system; the Bronze Honors Awards Nomination System (BrHANS), by the nominating Office/Region.

The NOAA review is conducted by the NIAB.
 - j. Recognition. Recipients receive an engraved medal at a ceremony. Individuals and every member of a group will receive an engraved medal. A single organization receives one engraved medal and each joint organization receives their own engraved medal.
5. NOAA Administrator's Award.
- a. Definition. The Administrator's Award recognizes employees or groups who have made significant contributions to NOAA's mission. The Award is a combination honorary and monetary.
 - b. Categories. Employees can receive an Award for equal employment opportunity, diversity, scientific research, public service, engineering development, environmental conservation, policy development, administrative support, public affairs, and information systems.
 - c. Award Type. Awards are given to individuals and groups.
 - d. Eligibility. All employees are eligible; supervisory and non-supervisory. They must have received a "meets expectations" or "eligible" rating for the most recent rating cycle. Members of the Senior Executive

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Service (SES) may not receive the monetary portion of this award, but may receive honorary recognition.

- e. Criteria The following criteria will be considered:
- The importance of the nominee's personal contribution to NOAA programs and the extent or degree to which it served an urgent need;
 - The uniqueness and originality of the nominee's contribution;
 - Whether the contribution brought unusual credit to NOAA and the DOC;
 - Whether the nominee's contribution resulted in an unusually important and clearly demonstrated improvement in a NOAA program;
 - If a nominee is a supervisor, whether his or her specific contribution demonstrates significant leadership skills such as the ability to lead and guide a competent staff, develop staff talents, and successfully run a productive program;
 - Exceptional leadership, skill, ingenuity, or ability displayed in administration or performance of duties, which accomplished significant savings in money, time, staff resources, or equipment;
 - Creation or development of a major improvement in a service which results in a high degree of benefit to NOAA or the DOC;
 - Successful implementation of new or improved policies in NOAA;
 - Exceptional skill and ingenuity in focusing on policy needs;
 - Contributions in engineering development in the areas of applied technology systems or equipment developed; and
 - Important scientific research contributions.
- f. The Call. The Director of Human Resources Management Office, NOAA, initiates the call. The Administrator's Award is usually announced in December.

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- g. Nominator. A supervisor and/or manager must nominate an employee. The Office/Regional director must approve the nomination.
- h. Package Form CD-326 is required for the Award. The CD-326 must
Requirements. include a certificate citation, program booklet citation, category, and a nomination justification. The nomination is submitted to W/CFO3 in hard-copy, with appropriate signatures.
- I. Review Two reviews are held to approve/disapprove nominations.
Requirements. The NWS review is conducted by the PMAC. PMAC approved nominations are forwarded to NOAA by W/CFO3.

 The NOAA review is conducted by the NIAB.
- j. Recognition. Recipients receive an engraved plaque and a \$5,000 monetary award at a ceremony. In the case of a group award, the award is split equally among the members.

6. NOAA Unit Citation Award.

- a. Definition. The Unit Citation Award recognizes groups of employees who, because of their individual and collective efforts, have made substantive contributions to NOAA's mission. The award is honorary.
- b. Categories. None
- c. Award Type. Awards are given to groups of employees.
- d. Eligibility. All employees are eligible; supervisory and non-supervisory. They must have received a "meets expectations" or "eligible" rating for the most recent rating cycle.
- e. Criteria. Consideration for a Unit Citation is given, but not limited to, those contributions which:
 - Are outstanding enough to bring unusual credit and/or favorable attention to NOAA and DOC;
 - Result in greatly advancing or furthering NOAA programs;

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- Accomplish significant savings or improvements in NOAA's operating programs; or

- Represent outstanding service to the public.

- f. The Call. Awards are generated when a nominating official deems it appropriate; no formal call is generated.
- g. Nominator. A supervisor and/or manager must nominate the group. The Office/Regional director must approve the nomination.
- h. Package Requirements. Form CD-326 is required for the Awards. Nominations are submitted to W/CFO3 via e-mail and in hard-copy, with appropriate signatures.
- I. Review Requirements. The Workforce/Human Capital Committee (WHCC) of the NWS Corporate Board reviews the nominations (a formal meeting is not usually required). The DAA approves the nominations.
- j. Recognition. Recipients receive one engraved unit plaque and individual certificates for each group member. Offices may have their own ceremony.

7. NOAA Employee/Team Member of the Month Award.

- a. Definition. Employee/Team Member of the Month Award recognizes one NOAA and one non-NOAA employee each month who have made significant contributions to NOAA programs. The Employee/Team Member of the Month Award is defined as exceptional and sustained effort toward accomplishment of NOAA's mission. The award is honorary.
- b. Categories. None
- c. Award Type. Awards are given to individuals.
- d. Eligibility. Nominees for the Employee of the Month must be employees at NOAA. They can not be Financial Management Centers (FMC) Directors or members of the SES. They must have received a "meets expectations" or "eligible" rating for the most recent rating cycle.

Nominees for the Team Member of the Month, must be a non-NOAA employee, e.g., contractor (National Data Buoy Center, Radar Operations Center, etc.). They must meet the goals of their contract or agreement.

- e. Criteria The following criteria will be considered:
 - The importance of the contribution and extent to which it served to contribute to NWS programs;
 - The enhancement of NWS service; and
 - The originality of the contribution and the inspiration it may serve to other employees toward excellence of performance.
- f. The Call. Award opportunities are rotated throughout the LOs. NOAA generates a schedule for the calendar year. Each month two LOs are responsible for selecting one employee and one team member. The selecting LO usually selects a winner every 9 months for each category.
- g. Nominator. Any supervisory or non-supervisory employee may nominate an employee. NWS employees can also nominate employees from other LOs during their designated month. Nominations submitted by an employee must be forwarded to the supervisor of the nominee and his/her Office/Regional Director (for assessment and approval).
- h. Package Requirements. Nominations are submitted on the NWS nomination form. Nominations are submitted to W/CFO3 via e-mail and in hard-copy, with appropriate signatures. The nomination should not exceed one page.
- I. Review Requirements. The WHCC of the NWS Corporate Board reviews the nominations (A formal meeting is not usually required). The Assistant Administrator (AA) for Weather Services approves the selectee.
- j. Recognition. Recipients receive a certificate signed by the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, as well as publicity in the form of poster displays, a page on the NOAA website, and NOAA Report articles including the names and photographs of those recognized. Recipients receive their awards shortly after they are announced.

They are formally recognized at other awards ceremonies (i.e., Administrator's, Bronze, etc.)

8. NWS On-The-Spot Award.

- a. Definition. The On-The-Spot Award Program provides another mechanism for recognizing good performance that is in-line with the NWS mission and goals. It should be used along with other incentive programs to provide quick and meaningful recognition. The use of this program is not mandatory. The decision to participate should be based on a careful examination of the requirements.
- b. Categories. An employee can receive an award for any worthy accomplishment. Examples that could lead to a nomination are as follows: Planning a special event which is particularly successful, completion of a short term project, handling an unusually heavy workload, partnership and team efforts, exceptional service to customers, or exceptional commitment to quality and efficiency.
- c. Award Type. Award is given to individuals or groups.
- d. Eligibility. All NWS employees are eligible, except for members of the SES, FMC Directors, Presidential Appointees, Contractors, Volunteers, or Post-Secondary Interns (i.e., AISES, HCAU, ORAU, TWC, Minority Access, etc.). NOTE: Federal employees from other Federal agencies and private citizens are also ineligible.
- e. The Call. Each participating Regional/Office Director will take the necessary steps to publicize the program throughout their servicing offices.
- f. Nominator/
Package Requirements. All employees may submit nominations on a CD-326 "Recommendation for Recognition;" however, a supervisor must sign and forward to the approving official for review and endorsement.
- g. Document Requirements. Nominations are received by the approving official, or his/her designee. After the form is approved, a copy will remain in the approving official's file (for the merchandise inventory process).
- h. Merchandise. Using the government purchase card (local funds), the office manager at each participating site will procure the merchandise. Approving officials shall ensure that the merchandise meets the following guidelines: the merchandise shall be honorary in nature

(something that the recipient will value), able to be worn, displayed, or used in the recipient's work environment, include the DOC, NOAA, or NWS seal or logo, not exceed \$75 in value, and not total more than \$125 per employee in a single performance year.

- I. Recognition. The recipient will receive a specific piece of merchandise (matched with the type of recognition) assigned by the approving official. The supervisor will present the merchandise along with a copy of the CD-326 to the recipient. The award should be presented to the recipient as soon after the contribution as possible. The presentation should be in full view of the recipient's peers in a way that ties the award directly to the performance.
- j. Reporting. The office will report annually on the quantity and value of merchandise procured, the disposition of merchandise, and the quantity and value of merchandise remaining on site. The report is due by October 30 and will cover the preceding fiscal year. The office will submit the report to their FMC Director, who will consolidate reports from their participating offices and forward a summary report to the Management and Organization Division, W/CFO3.

9. NWS Isaac M. Cline Award.

- a. Definition. The Isaac M. Cline Award recognizes operational excellence of line and program staff employees in the delivery of products and services supporting and enhancing the achievement of NWS strategic and operating plans.

The award has three levels of recognition. The first echelon recognizes deserving employees in the local office (WFOs, RFCs, CWSUs, etc.). The second echelon recognizes deserving employees within a Region/Office. The third echelon recognizes employees NWS-wide.
- b. Categories. Employees can receive an Award for meteorology; hydrology; hydrometeorology; engineering, electronics, and facilities; program management and administration; support services; leadership; and upper air observation.
- c. Award Type. Awards are given to individuals or teams in all categories, except Upper Air Observation; only teams are awarded in that category.

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- d. Eligibility. All NWS non-supervisors and non-managers are eligible for the award in all categories. Supervisors and managers (non-SES) are only eligible for the Leadership and Program Management/Administration categories. Members of the SES are ineligible for all categories.
- e. Criteria. Awards are to recognize substantial accomplishments in support of the NWS mission, which demonstrate one or more of the following:
- Technical proficiency - demonstrating an outstanding level of accomplishment in furthering the agency's mission. Achievements can include: producing and delivering quality weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings you can trust when you need them most; using cutting edge techniques; eliminating weather related fatalities; and improving the economic value of weather information.
 - Initiative and creativity - demonstrating an outstanding level of accomplishment in creativity or innovative problem solving, or developing new systems, methods, or procedures.
 - Productivity - providing or fostering a culture that provides services in a cost effective manner. Activities may include, but are not limited to: establishing measurements and standards for improving service; or, implementing and continuously assessing performance against standards for improvements. Accomplishments are to be expressed in measurable terms, such as cycle time, cost reduction, and/or quality to customers.
 - Teamwork - demonstrating dedication and hard work enabling or assisting the work of their fellow employees (may include advancing the goals of the team, office, division, Center, Region, Office or the NWS.)
- f. The Call. The Award is announced by W/CFO3. The call is generated in May. The period of recognition is June 1 to May 31 for all categories except Upper Air Observations; its period of recognition is August 1 to July 31.
- g. Nominator. Any NWS employee or customer may submit a nomination to the appropriate local level supervisor.

- h. Package Requirements. Nominations must be submitted on form CD-326. Nominations must cite the category for which the nomination is being submitted. A hard-copy with appropriate signatures is required. Local level nominations are due to the local level supervisor in June. Regional/Office level nominations are due to the appropriate director in July. National level nominations are due to W/CFO3 in September.
- I. Review Requirements. Three reviews are held to select winners for each level of competition. Level one, the local level, the Local Office Team (LOT) in the office reviews and selects one winner in each category (except Upper Air Observations; competition begins at the Regional level for this category). If there is no LOT, the supervisor will complete this process. Winners at the local level are forwarded to the second level of competition; the Office/Regional level. The Regional/Office Director in conjunction with the National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO) Regional Chair/National Weather Service Headquarters representative-at-large, will review and select one Regional/Office winner for each category. Winners at the Regional/Office level are forwarded to the third and final level of competition; the National level. The AA, Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA), Deputy Chief Financial Officer, NWSEO President, NWSEO Executive Vice President, and NWSEO designees will review and select one winner in each category (a formal meeting is not usually required).
- j. Recognition. Recipients receive a certificate of recognition (at the first level of competition), a region or office engraved plaque (at the second level of competition), and a National award shadowbox and/or engraved plaque (at the third level of competition). NOTE: At the National level, individual winners receive a shadow box; groups receive one shadow box and individual engraved plaques.

National award recipients receive a \$5,000 monetary award. In the case of a group award, the award is split equally among the members.

FMC Directors may present the award at a mini-ceremony. Directors may also plan for the AA or DAA to present the award (if an existing visit is planned) or they may designate the office manager to present the award.

10. Responsibilities of the NWS Incentive Awards Officers. The NWS Incentive Awards Officers are employees in the Management and Organization Division, of the Chief Financial/Chief Administrative Office (CFO3). They are responsible for overseeing the NWS awards process for various DOC and NOAA awards, as well as, an NWS award. They oversee the NWS nomination and review processes; they serve as the focal point for NWS FMCs; they work closely with the DOC and NOAA Incentive Awards Officers; they work with the NWS, NOAA Incentive Awards Board member, on the overall awards process for the Medals and Administrator's Awards; they serve as the point-of-contact for award recipients; they assist and/or carry-out post selection activities.

10.1 Overall Responsibilities.

- a. Keep FMC apprised of information related to the various awards:
 - generate the initial call memo;
 - answer any questions during the nomination and selection processes;
 - follow up with FMC on incomplete nominations;
 - attend the PMAC meeting (for the Medals and Administrator's Awards) to record the results and convey details on current and previous nominees;
 - notify managers of selections; and
 - convey post selection information.
- b. Receive and review nominations from NWS FMCs:
 - initial nomination packages; and
 - nomination re-writes (if necessary).
- c. Work with the DOC and NOAA Incentive Awards Officers:
 - receive the initial notification;
 - request guidance for NWS senior managers on unclear matters;
 - forward information on the final NWS nominees;
 - serve as the focal point between DOC/NOAA and NWS senior managers; and
 - assist in post selection activities.
- d. Work with the NWS, NOAA Incentive Awards Board member on the overall awards process for the Medals and Administrator's Awards:
 - ensure he/she is kept abreast of changes to nominations, due dates, etc.
- e. Serve as the Point-of-Contact for award recipients:
 - prepare congratulatory and informational memos;
 - convey details of post selection activities;
 - coordinate AA/DAA award reception remarks with the Communications Office.

- coordinate internal communications strategies with the Communications Office.
- receive travel expense information from recipients; forward information to the budget office; and
- handle other miscellaneous matters.

- f. Assist and/or carry-out post selection activities:
- plan NWS reception ceremonies;
 - oversee the preparation of award plaques; and
 - forward plaques for non-ceremonial awards/non-attending recipients.

11. Responsibilities of the NWS FMCs in the Awards Process.

The FMCs are responsible for:

- Forwarding the award calls to their offices;
- Answering any questions associated with the call or forwarding the questions to CFO3;
- Reviewing incoming nomination for completeness;
- Following up on incomplete nominations;
- Selecting the Regional/Office level winners for the Cline Awards;
- Forwarding nominations to CFO3;
- Facilitating the re-write process (if needed) during the reviews;
- Inputting approved nominations into the HANS and BrHANS;
- Notifying the approved award recipients; and
- Holding ceremonies for the Isaac M. Cline Award recipients or delegating the responsibility to their office manager.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS OF THE TYPES OF AWARDS

TYPES OF AWARD	DEFINITION
Individual	only one person.
Group/Team	<p>a group consists of up to 10 individuals working together, where each person makes a specific substantive contribution to the achievement being recognized (a written justification is required for groups/teams with more than ten individuals).</p> <p>NOTE: Group limitations do not apply to the Unit Citation or Isaac M. Cline Awards.</p>
Organization	<p>An organization may be either an office, division, or sub-unit, which is formally recognized as a separate entity, or an ad hoc organization assembled to work on a specific project. A single organization is one office, division, or sub-unit where all or most of the employees from that organization work together on a specific project. A joint organizational award consists of two or more offices, division, or sub-units working together to complete a specific project.</p>

APPENDIX B

**LIST OF OTHER DOC/NOAA
AWARDS AND THEIR WEB SITES**

Best Practices - <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~Diversity/bestprac.html>

Guidance for the following awards can be found at:
<http://ohrm.doc.gov/handbooks/pm/recognition.htm>

Career Service Recognition

Cash-In-Your Account

Diversity Spectrum

Gainsharing

Goalsharing

Invention

NOAA Technology Transfer

Peer

Performance

Special Act or Service

Suggestion

Time-Off

Quality Step Increase

APPENDIX C

LIST OF FEDERAL AWARDS AND THEIR PROPOSED ANNOUNCEMENT DATES

AWARDS	MONTH OF ANNOUNCEMENT
Arthur S. Flemming	November
David Johnson	September
Donald L. Scantlebury Memorial Award for Distinguished Leadership	December
Environmental Heroes Award	November
Federal Asian Pacific American Council	February
Federal Energy & Water Management	May
Federal Engineer of the Year	September
Federal Executive of the Year	September
GEICO Public Service	August
Government Technical Leadership	May
Innovations in American Government	October
National Operations Security	September
National Public Service Award	February
PILLAR	April
Presidential Early Career	May
President's Quality Award	May
Public Service Excellence	September
William A. Jump	March
Women of Color Government &	March

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Defense Technology Award